



# CECOM Science & Technology (S&T) Reinvention Lab

Issue 10

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## FIRST PHASE OF DEMO PROJECT COMPLETE

The first phase of implementation of the S&T Personnel Demonstration Project is complete. Personnel actions were effective 19 May 2002 for approximately 565 RDEC employees located at Fort Belvoir and Fort Monmouth, and 207 SEC employees located at Fort Belvoir and Fort Monmouth, Fort Sill and Fort Huachuca. At Fort Monmouth, Phase 1 included RDEC and SEC Managers, supervisors and team leaders in engineering and scientific occupations. At the other sites, all employees are included.

### Things You'll Notice Immediately

Demo employees will receive two Standard Form (SF)-50's. This is the Notification of Personnel Action that you typically receive when something occurs in your Federal employment, e.g. a promotion, reassignment, etc. One SF-50 documents the change from grade to pay band, and the other documents any change in salary as a result of the buy-in of the within grade increase.

Instead of GS you will be either a DB if you are an Engineer or Scientist, DE if you are in a Business or Technical occupation or DK if you are in an administrative or clerical position. Your Pay Band I, II, III or IV follows the DB, DE and DK.

### Training

Training continues on the new Performance Appraisal system at all sites in preparation for the August mid-point review. As this is a totally new process, the mid-point extends beyond the normal performance review and will test the process of rating employees, reconciliation of the ratings and calculation of payouts along with automated tools designed to support it.

The training includes an 8-hour class on the Rating Process for Managers, Supervisors and Team Leaders; a 4-hour class for employees on "Maximizing

Performance Reviews, and a 4-hour class on the Reconciliation Process for Managers and Supervisors.

### Demo Web-Site

Check out the demo web-site, an on-line tutorial has been added, which takes you through all of the features of the demo, to include how employees convert into the demo from GS to pay bands; the pay for performance appraisal process, sabbaticals, leaving the demonstration, etc.

We've also posted the Internal Operating Procedures developed for the project. These procedures expand upon the information contained in the Federal Register, dated 30 October 2001.

### Automation

To support both the classification and appraisal processes, two web-based automated tools have been developed and fielded to the demo workforce.

The classification tool was adapted from the Army Research Laboratory "PD Quick" system. It provides a "wizard" interface to walk the user through the process of constructing position descriptions using pre-classified duty statements. The primary users of this tool are supervisors and HR administrators.

The second tool supports Performance

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Evaluation. It is designed to help employees and raters develop and post individual objectives, track individual accomplishments, facilitate self-assessment and rate performance.

These applications are available any time; anywhere the employee is stationed, and facilitates the execution of business processes across geographic boundaries. Further, it is intended that the tools will integrate under AKO in accordance with emerging guidance.

## How We Got Here

By Michael Gruen

On May 19, 2002, the CECOM S&T Personnel Demonstration Project was implemented for specific employees within the RDEC and SEC. This article is a brief history of the implementation.

In July 1995, the CECOM RDEC was approved as a DoD Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratory. Within that approval was the authority to implement a personnel demonstration project. On March 21, 1997, the RDEC Director, made the decision to implement a

personnel demonstration project. A series of meetings was held to brief employees, senior management and union leaders on the concept.

Volunteer employee teams were organized in September to design and develop specific portions of the project plan. These teams are largely responsible for the plan now implemented. These teams were 10-15 persons representing the major CECOM worksites: Fort Monmouth, Fort Belvoir and Fort Huachuca. There were 4 teams: Performance Management focused on options for a new performance appraisal system; Pay and Classification eliminating GS grades and designing broad pay bands; Staffing and Employee Development to identify new ways of hiring and expanding developmental opportunities; and Workforce Communication to develop information and marketing tools for the project.

The different teams consulted experts in the personnel field and visited other personnel demonstration sites. In January 1998 the first of a series of newsletters was published.

Team members at the different work sites came up with different alternatives. The Pay and Classification Team resolved its different pay band designs through a summit meeting. The Performance Team selected through majority vote, a pay for performance system.

After consulting with the Northeast Civilian Personnel Operations Center, the specific team proposals were consolidated into one document. The major initiatives included: a new appointment authority for term employees; an extended probationary period for newly hired engineers and scientists; pay banding; streamlined hiring; modified reduction-in-force (RIF) procedures; simplified job classification; a pay

### PERSONNEL DEMO

The Personnel Demo Newsletter is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-81. It is published for employees of CECOM Research, Development and Engineering Center and Software Engineering Center to create a better understanding of the S&T Personnel Demo. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.  
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for performance based appraisal system; academic degree and certificate training; sabbaticals and a voluntary emeritus corps.

In May 1998, town meetings were held for all employees and specific meetings were held with Union leaders. In June 1998, a detailed project plan was submitted through AMC to the Department of the Army, beginning the formal review and approval process. A BETA test of the proposed performance appraisal system was held in August. Recommendations from the test resulted in some changes that are reflected in the current plan.

In March 1999, a revised plan was submitted to Department of the Army reflecting BETA test results and requested changes from DA staff. During the summer, focus briefings were held with small employee groups at each organization. Feedback from those meetings resulted in the removal of the annual General Pay Increase ("COLA") from the pay pool funds and some revision in the design of the pay bands. The FY2000 Defense Authorization Act resulted in additional changes by

removing the restriction on the number of high-grade positions and supervisory ratios.

In December 1999, the plan went to OSD, was approved there and sent to the Office of Personnel Management on May 31, 2001. OPM comments were incorporated in the plan resulting in more changes to the pay bands and the addition of a performance-based rule. Legislative and Administration changes further delayed implementation of the plan. In February 2001, the ISEC Commander announced that ISEC would not participate in the demonstration project.

On June 8, 2001, the proposed plan was published in the Federal Register on June 19, 2001. A public hearing was conducted on July 12. Comments were considered and a second notice of approval was published on October 30, 2001.

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